

MINUTES

1. Call to Order by Chair Larry Smith at 4:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call: Rebecca Carlson, Board Member, Terrell Yarbrough, Supt., Mickie Erb, Assistant Supt. For Curriculum & Instruction, Megan Hastings, Board member, Kurt Thompson, Board member, Becky Swenson, Parker Center Assistant Principal, Kasie Kosinski, Windsor Principal, Becky Logan, Director of Elementary Education, Jen Curless, Middle School Associate Principal, Ryan Reinecke, Rock Cut Principal, Elana Schelling-Tufte, Olson Park & HFT rep, Holly Perino, Ralston Assistant Principal, Elementary, Mike Valentine, Loves Park Principal, Abbi Edwards, Machesney Principal, Emily Bjork, Maple Assistant Principal, Jake Hubert, Director of Secondary Education, Marya Olson Park Principal, Jeremy Bois, High School Principal, Terese Marinelli, Windsor Assistant Principal, Heidi, Director of Special Education & Student Support Services, Evelyn Meeks, Board member, Monica McWilliams, Marquette Assistant Principal, Kris Arduino, Board recording secretary, Larry Smith Board Member & Chair

Guests: Leah Krippner, High School, Erin, Harlem High School and Elana Mach, High School
Kyra Newnam, High School

Larry noted it is Leap Year this year which only comes every four years.

3. Approval of Agenda

1st Jeremy 2nd Abbi

All aye, Motion carried

4. Approval of Meeting minutes: December 19, 2023

1st Terrell 2nd Abbi

All aye, Motion carried

5. Comments from the Community – none

Dr. Yarbrough read the Mission Statement

Larry noted that our Belief Statements were noted and are equally important because they are the basis on which the Mission Statement is founded upon and read at every Board meeting

6. Discussion items

6.A. 1. Parts of the Whole

A. Student Learning

B. Learning Conditions

C. Elevating Educators

D. Building Stats

E. Celebrations/School Events

Larry noted that the purpose of this committee, “Parts of the Whole”, is based on looking at the SIP Plans of all schools for the commonality amongst them.

Dr. Erb noted each building has pulled out highlights. Larry noted that there are 70 slides so rather than review each slide, he opened up the discussion to the group asking if there was anything about the other schools contained in the report that they found interesting to share out.

Kurt noted at Parker Center with 684 SIF forms, we have 3 OSS, how does it work in between that, where does it escalate between SIFs and OSS. Becky Swenson noted that the SIFs are used for various reasons and behaviors, but OSS is considered as offenses and for which there is a consequence. Parents come in and meet with teachers, social workers are involved at times for student support. There are meetings with staff that attempt to work through things with kids. We do not do detentions in K. The purpose of the SIF form is to track that data to make sure the student gets what he or she needs. We changed from referrals to SIF almost ten years ago per Ryan. Heidi said she and her assistant director are involved with kids that are struggling. Kurt noted then with the SIF form it can be a simple issue or actual violence to other staff or students. How does he see the difference in what happened by this report? Is there a way to better identify the issue on this? Becky noted the more serious student violations work through MTSS. They have to look at each individual form. Larry noted he heard the question as when looking at other schools can you see the type of behavior. The SIF form does show the type of behavior. Elana noted it is a form to track the data for the team to work with student to get what that student needs. For instance, if they are hitting a teacher we are figuring out what the student needs or where the anger is coming from. These students are young and we don’t want them labeled with referrals but the SIF form is an important part of meeting a student’s needs. At the K level, Dr. Erb confirmed a referral is not used but the SIF is appropriate to see whatever detail evidence we have.

Kurt noted that there is a problem happening in K nationwide and if we don’t hone in and get a game plan for this we going to lose teachers. Teachers are getting burned out and we need to make sure the data is collected appropriately. He needs to see more information but he can’t tell what the SIF’s are for by this report. We need to make sure from year to year to see the trend. Kurt noted he doesn’t want to put tags on students, but if there is a fog around the students they will move on with it piled on top of them. He noted we have to identify the issue and Terrell is aware. Elana noted that she disagrees somewhat but this is a systemic issue across the country and not just PC. Every one of the admins will tell you that since the pandemic behavior has changed, we accept more now than ever because the children do not have their basic needs met, whether that be at home or due to isolation from the pandemic. Everyone is well aware of the issue and would agree that we could write referrals for multiple students every day but it won’t solve the problem. With data in a SIF form we can document and then can look at what we need to do to meet the child’s needs. She agrees about the teachers as two came to her crying today. We know the issue, we need more SEL, more social workers, smaller class size, more teachers but it all costs money and no one knows how to solve this issue. Kurt noted that if we use that it is too expensive, it sounds like we are giving up. Is PBIS working, are we tracking it. Lack of attention from parents to students is higher than ever and then the pandemic on top of that. What are we doing, is it the right thing? Looking at what we are doing if we can improve on it we need to do that. Kurt noted he wants to make sure we are all aware of it and if there is something to change lets change it.

Dr. Erb noted that ISBE is starting some webinars as it is a large problem. She has signed up for that. Dr. Yarbrough noted that the Superintendents are also trying to work on this throughout the State. If we can document and get the student help, we are working in the right direction but it is slower than we like. If we are able to identify the need we are working in the right direction. State wide superintendents are saying they just don't know what to do. Kurt noted it needs to be here at Education Committee. Kurt noted that teachers want it called out. Everyone knows there is an issue, Terrell interjected noting we don't show it here but it doesn't mean we are not addressing it. Kurt asked where we see it then. Emily noted we see it every day. Ryan noted it is more like a looking forward type of thing, and it is like we are trying to do the old method of school with all new problems, i.e. social media, AI, etc. I can't help but think, it is hard, because we are expected to teach to the standards, but what our kids really need is the social emotional piece as well. Our kids really need curriculum as a vehicle to teach social emotional skills to set kids up for success. We need to shift the focus 100% as that will set our kids up for success anyway. We have to be able to adapt to shifting needs. Sometimes data doesn't show up that year. Larry noted the objective of the committee is to keep people focused on these things and educators do see that. Elana noted you may see the data in that year but it might be the next school year which is hard as it is tied to your evaluation. These educators do see that and the numbers are personal to them. It is their day in and day out experience so by having this meeting and having the numbers be able to see this, this is for everyone to see what is going on in the District. Larry noted that it is the Superintendent's job to make sure that these people own these numbers. I think this Committee is what helps us make sure everyone is continually focused. Kurt noted we have an amazing talent pool, it is getting the most out of this meeting. We just need to identify the issues and drill down into them. What is not working, what are the issues, how can we share between grade levels. Numerous administrators at the table noted that they do this. Kurt noting that he would rather deal with these issues now rather than with less or more inexperienced staff coming in. Larry interjected it is the work of this group.

Jason noted this Committee is about reporting data and problem solving is the focus of the SBC (Student Behavior Committee) when our principals are together; but if this is what you want to see as Board members in this Committee, we should rethink the direction of this Board Committee. We are reporting data but not doing the problem solving here as that is done in SBC with staff. Larry noted he does not think this is the forum for problem solving but rather to present the data, sharing with each other and it is an opportunity for professional development and for people to take the data and work on the details in areas of need. Becky noted she could break it down but Larry said that would be in the SBC groups problem solving with the principals and in staff meetings. Kurt said he is alright with this but Kurt asked how all the information is being decimated to staff. Can Board members participate in that in some way? How do people or Board members know about it. Terrell noted that he can make sure it is reported out at meetings. We can get back to Board presentations as well. Kurt asked where the trends are as he can't see it from this report either, as the data doesn't reflect if there is one student getting a referral or several referrals. Mickie noted we can add the MTSS triangle that we had before to show this data you are asking about. It would take more time to pull out SIF forms for PC because we have the other things in Skyward. Larry noted we use to look at that data every which way and it became very onerous. There is so much data. Kurt said the Board needs to see all of this. Terrell noted his concern is the data that we use drives instruction. He cited for instance when the graduation dropped for students of color he contacted Jeremy right away to see what was going on. We are doing stuff with the data, it is just not there for no

purpose. Kurt said that is great, we just want to see it. Ryan noted there is mountains of data that exist and we need to decide what we want. Kurt likes what Terrell said as it became apparent there was a trend or issue and there was something done. Possibly there is an escalation point or there could be a drop in escalation. I want to see the direct reflection of the data. Elana noted these are in all our committee meetings at school. Staff and committee meetings are where these are being discussed. Abbi noted you trend by student and not by building. Kurt would like updates if possible. Josh noted to pull data from SIF forms is like one by one. The referrals are in Skyward. Abbi noted SIFs are not apple to apple. Kurt would like updates on the triangles and data so he can see this.

Kasie noted she noticed disproportionate rates across the district amongst student groups and the need to continue our equity work is important. Specifically looking at students with IEPs, black ,and two or more races which speak to the need to continue our equity work. Larry noted that IEP and Free and Reduced have come closer. Mickie noted they are a lot closer than they have been.

Mr. Valentine noted he has seen a change and if you look at his suspension numbers they are very high at the first half of the year but after break and making some adjustments the numbers are coming down as a result of the PBIS program and kids learning expectations and consequences. You can't delineate this but we are seeing the changes. Larry noted that there is a bigger story than just the number at the District and building levels.

Larry noted attendance rates are really good. 90% is really good but we had schools at 93% which is great. Almost every school was over 90% with the high school at 93%. For people that work in any kind of an organization that is not a school, this percentage is a very good attendance rate. Very positive, so whatever you are doing keep doing in regard to getting kids to school we need to keep doing.

Larry also noted in Maple in their notes and analysis, the term "reduction and better alignment". Emily noted we noticed this last year and spent staff time on discussing the referrals. We looked at the number of students receiving referrals and had frank conversations. Specifically, for special education students that have plans, we should not be writing a referral but diving into their plan.

Larry noted that at Olson Park under Learning Conditions, CICO can be quite successful. Marya noted we push the MTSS flow chart so that CICO is the first step. If a student is having difficulties this is the first step with CICO. The Mentor Mentee relationships and repeated check ins and checking throughout the day really helps does work when done well. Elana noted that something Marya is good at is if we are a teacher and CICO is not working, we come to her and let her know that and we change direction. We have the ability to be flexible. Terrell noted that the high school has started CICO and it has been a phenomenal help with freshman.

Larry noted at Windsor – under the proactive measures reviewed, this is like if someone were to put PBIS in a nutshell, actually it is a nutshell for Windsor as it is all about PBIS and using the District Behavior Matrix in it as this is where PBIS starts and it is good to see where it all starts and about teaching behaviors and making sure how everyone understands how to do the right thing.

He pointed out that Ralston MTSS usage shows and he is assuming that there is some carryover as 54 in Math and 32 in ELA but some might be the same student, but at least 54 kids are

receiving extra help in MTSS out of 300 students. This is 16.7% which is huge. 40 kids are receiving enrichment which is huge. Using the resources is great and Larry noted this in all buildings. Emily noted she believes it is the bottom 20% that should be receiving MTSS in buildings.

Larry asked questions about reading and math proficiencies and noted that maybe the slides need a title for people not as close to it to understand what they are for. For instance, what time frame do the numbers represent. It would help to have it labeled as this is iReady testing from the most recent benchmark testing – it should be labeled iReady testing there could be some labeling “compared to the fall benchmark” and identify the numbers we are looking at is winter benchmark. You need to identify the numbers.

Larry noted across the board with few exceptions in the last predicted statement iReady predicts where you are at from the IAR from scores. Larry noted that almost all predict to be higher than last year’s levels. In regards to the referrals Mr. Thompson made a good point when talking about looking at the data, going to the high school first referral data graphs are good too look at, Larry would be in favor of number of students getting referrals and how many referrals each kid received being included and not just an accumulation of all kids put together. He gave Maple African American as an example. He would be in favor of having the number of students with the number of referrals per student. Emily noted these graphs are red flags to her and she would go further into it, you can access the data but it is more difficult. Kurt noted that maybe the tool we are using needs to be changed so maybe we need to add a field adding that data so it is not difficult to pull. Larry noted that he appreciates the fact that Emily said these are red flags and she digs further to see what is going on.

Jason noted that he is seeing growth happening at the Middle School. For quite some time there was stagnant data and noticing the growth happening it looks like what staff is doing is starting to pay off positively. Kurt noted that we need to make sure that we are prepared for reporting changes with moving kids to the middle school. The data will then be changing. Larry noted in Skyward you do each year the moving of the grades up a year. Mickie noted we know to look for the difference in data.

Larry noted that the things we are doing by moving 6th grade to the middle school is a big deal and very exciting. We all need to be involved with this and he hopes everyone is working on this. We want to be working with fifth graders now which principals said that they are working on it all the time. Mickie noted summer school will be at the middle school for the 5th and 6th grade transition building will be there also. Larry noted the transition meetings at schools were terrific. This is a good and positive thing and we need to spin it at the District level and middle school as positive as possible. You want to be ahead of the curve.

6.B. II. 1st Semester Comparison & Proactive Measures

6.C. III. Behavior Data Quarter 2

6.D. IV. In This Space

Larry noted he doesn’t want to spend too much time on this one but he asked Mrs. Krippner to be here tonight to answer any questions.

In regards to “In This Space”, Terrell helped me out in reference to the Equity & Social Justice Committee as I wasn’t sure who all attended this but was told it is people from the equity

teams from all schools and principals as well. I would like to get in groups of three and spend four minutes talking about what the equity people bring back from the Committee to utilize these.

The Committee broke into small groups to discuss what the Equity & Social Justice Committee brings to their schools.

Small group share outs:

Jeremy - noted he enjoys these meetings and likes to take back activities that are shared and has used every one so far with staff and E team, and leadership team. He needs to get better with using the themes each month and communication.

Kasie - noted she would love to have it come from the District so we are not each working on the same thing and we can be more cohesive.

Monica - noted that we do pull from what we learn from those meetings and have used those things this year and will use next year as well finding that it is very helpful.

Terese - noted that when we get the information on what was presented, we then use for SIP day by using activities and we utilize these as they are in line with SIP goals.

Kasie - noted that she shared with Loves Park and Maple that we sign up to attend one meeting and they come back to our school team and share out and we talk about how we are going to use this in equity planning. They then come back to the school based equity team and share out and we discuss how to use this. Right now, it is Black History month, next month will be Women's History month.

Abbi - noted we talked that we liked going and bringing back information to our E teams and it is very helpful not reproducing the activities. The ESJ did implicit bias and this is a mandated training by the State that we could use instead of coming up with something. It is work hard not harder.

Elana - shared a bit about how she is thankful that Kyra and Alana setting the structure of a word for each month which helps us decide and maintain the focus on what we will do for our students this month. Olson Park has a mentorship called SOAR (Scholars of all Races) where younger and older students are paired up and we utilize some of the ideas from equity to do activities with them which is always based on the word of the month and based on what we need in our building at that time. The students love being able to talk about these things and feel validated in these conversations and in building that community. We have used other parts from other buildings that have created lessons that we do with our staff. It is always about building that community.

Megan asked in relation to the activity with the E teams and Equity Committee, why is the item noted "In This Space". Terrell asked Larry if after hearing everything he just heard is there anything specifically about the newsletter, "In This Space" he still has a question on. Larry noted that he wanted to share how the equity team used that information which is in that newsletter probably more content than specifically the newsletter. Megan noted that the newsletter is not just for e-teams but is to reach the District because Equity and Social Justice is a district initiative, and she would highly suggest both attend Larry and Rebecca attend an ESJ meeting. Megan asked again what the specific question Rebecca has in relation to the "In

This Space” newsletter. Rebecca noted she brought up to Jason and Larry the question about some of the suggested reading for the secondary level students being a little concerning to her that was in the newsletter. Her concern is that some of the suggested reading for secondary students is to the staff, as well as possibly even to the parents of a student that brings it home and could be questionable. She noted that if you pull up the “In This Space” newsletter; she only pulled up the last two meetings, the January meeting was about community. The story was about a young Asian girl who decided to go into a lesbian nightclub. I have no problem with the book itself and it can be available for reading, but her concern is if we are suggesting this book for the students and teachers or is this a we really don’t care – Megan asking Rebecca which one of the things, Asian woman, nightclub, and lesbian, is really the issue for her. Rebecca said she is not concerned about any of them but doesn’t want to see them become political. Megan noted that being Asian and lesbian are not political. Elana noted it only becomes political if you make it political and these students also need to be represented. Parents have full rights to allow or disallow their students to read or not read materials.

Evelyn noted we are in the future and don’t need people dictating what is read. Rebecca noted that she is not saying we cannot have the books or read them, she just doesn’t want it to be political. Elana noted that Rebecca set that narrative. You are on the Board and you know we are representing our students and read parts of the Mission Statement. Rebecca said her question is are we taking students who feel marginalized and putting them into a group that they don’t necessarily want to be put into. Megan noted they are marginalized and have spent years in this country getting less than. Terese noted that students feel much more included when they are able to access books such as this. In This Space provides some of that opportunity. White students need to know and realize what their peers are going through as well.

Jason noted the newsletter offers perspectives to be shared. The more he engages in other perspectives the better he can understand. Our counselors and teachers need these tools to understand children where they are. 70% of the staff are reading the newsletter in order to hear different perspectives and support students. It is a tool to help us do right for kids. It is about a rightful presence.

Larry thanked everyone for their feedback. Politics with a capital “P” is when we divide ourselves into different camps. This is a danger and it has been addressed. Mrs. Carlson’s concern is whether somebody in this camp is taking actions in order to keep the camp mentality and engage in the politics with a capital “P”. Larry noted that it is not. It is done to bring people in and have everybody engaged. Terrell noted he hopes that Rebecca and Larry go out and say this because that is the only way there won’t be a narrative out there that we are doing politics with a capital “P”. You as Board members need to shut it down. We are creating for all our kids, free and reduced, marginalized students, LGBTQ students. We need you to shut it down and be honest about it. We don’t need the divide anymore.

Evelyn noted for African American kids, kids of all races when they see somebody the same as them they feel they should not have to hide. They feel a part of something. You can’t have a dictatorship. We need to live free and people should not tell others how to run their house. Rebecca stated that if you research Margaret Senger, she was against black people.

Evelyn noted that the narrative that was being spread in this community is dangerous. We need to keep out of other people’s business. Megan noted all of us need to set an example and

our actions have consequences. It is not trivial. She seconds Dr. Yarbrough and Mrs. Meeks that as a Board we need to do better. Rebecca noted it is not personal and she apologized. Kurt noted that we have so much we need to do, people trying to be helpful, there is no smoke or fire. Terrell noted that we should not be talking about library books and “In This Space” as we have discussed this already. We should not need to keep discussing these.

6.E. V. Library Books

Larry asked for Leah Krippner’s input.

When asked about books, Leah Krippner noted that she regularly puts out a book of the week on Mondays. highlighting it for the week. Sometimes there is a trailer or she does a summary. She noted she has display cases in the hallway and window displays. Larry asked if any of those books are related to Black History month. Leah noted that they are now up in the window and advertised in the cases. Women’s History month as well. Leah also noted Margaret Senger is a good read in response to Rebecca’s earlier comment.

Kyra noted that the creation of the newsletter came from staff who did not know how to have difficult conversations with students. Many wanted resources and information for staff to get a better understanding of their students and that was the message behind it. The newsletter is not communicated to students. That was not the purpose. You can delete it if you don’t want to read it. It was created solely as a resource for staff.

Kasie noted that she needs help advocating for students with experiences that she has not had personally as she does not know what their experience has been and using the resource is very helpful. Kyra noted the equity work is not a secret and was never meant to be secret. She stands behind every newsletter that goes out as this is what we are at Harlem.

Next month’s word is Courageous Leadership per Elana

7. Next Education Committee meeting: April 23, 2024

8. Adjournment

1st Jake 2nd Abbi

All in favor aye, Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 6:19 a.m.